DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 219 PS 017 820

AUTHOR Goodman, Irene F.; Brady, Joanne P.
TITLE The Challenge of Coordination: Head Start's Relationship to State-Funded Preschool Initiatives. Executive Summary.
INSTITUTION Education Development Center, Inc., Newton, Mass.
SPONS AGENCY Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC. Head Start Bureau.
REPORT NO DHHS-CA-90-CD-0554
PUB DATE May 88
NOTE 24p.; For complete report, see PS 017 819.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Comparative Analysis; *Compensatory Education; Coordination; *Disadvantaged; *Financial Support; Government Role; *Preschool Education; State Government; *State Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

In the 1980s, there was a notable increase in state funding of preschool programs, particularly for economically disadvantaged children. In fiscal year 1988, a total of 28 states projected program expenditures of almost 226 million dollars. The Administration for Children, Youth, and Families funded a study to explore Head Start's relationship to state-funded preschool programs across the country and the implications of the findings for Head Start planning and policy development. Major findings of the study are organized by six research questions: (1) How are states currently supporting preschool education? (2) How do state-funded preschool programs compare with Head Start? (3) How has Head Start coordinated with state-funded preschool programs? (4) What are the barriers to coordination? (5) To what extent does Head Start receive support from state-funded programs? (6) What are the conclusions and implications of the study? This executive summary provides background information and study rationale, as well as major findings related to each of the six questions. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

The Challenge of Coordination

Head Start's Relationship to State-Funded Preschool Initiatives

Executive Summary

Irene F. Goodman, Ed.D.
and
Joanne P. Brady

Education Development Center, Inc.
55 Chapel Street
Newton, MA 02160

May 1988

This document was prepared pursuant to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Cooperative Agreement Number 90-CD-0554. The statements and conclusions herein are those of Education Development Center, Incorporated, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the sponsoring agency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Carrying out a study of this magnitude in such a short time frame relies on the good will and thoughtful participation of many people. We would first like to thank the many professionals at the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, and particularly the staff of the Head Start Bureau for their guidance, review, and support of this project. Special thanks are due Commissioner Dodie Truman Borup, Deputy Commissioner Joseph Mattola, Associate Commissioner Elizabeth Strong Ussery, and Deputy Associate Commissioner Clennie Murphy, Jr.

We are especially grateful to Douglas Klafehn, Chief, Program Management Operations Branch, and Karen Mitchell, Program Analyst, who provided us with helpful feedback throughout the process—from design of study to production of this report.

Our colleagues in the national network of Resource Centers deserve a special thank-you for assisting in our data collection efforts. Resource Center staffs, at their most hectic training time, added many precious hours to their already long days to gather information that was crucial to our study. In addition, we appreciate the contributions of the federal regional office staff in providing us with important regional perspectives.

We are especially grateful to the following people who were generous with their time and candid in their responses to our questions: administrators of state-funded early childhood programs, governors' assistants, Head Start directors, and particularly the eight directors who participated in our day-long focus group. Thank you to Michelle Seligson and Fern Marx of the Wellesley College and Bank Street College Public School Early Childhood Study who kindly shared information about their study with us.

Many of our colleagues at EDC deserve our appreciation for their assistance. Each played a role critical to our success. A special acknowledgment goes to Nancy Ames, Associate Director of SSP, and Ruth Bowman, Associate Director of the New England Resource Center, for their careful review and substantive suggestions along the way. Our colleagues Margaret Enright and Sheila Skiffington were always there when we needed them, and for that we express sincere thanks.

Special mention should also be made of the following people for their technical support: Sandra Belk, Anne Corrigan, Cecile Heimann, Claire Karesky, Maureen Kelley, Philip Pennie, Carol Quintiliani, Ruth Rappaport, Carole Teves, and Michelle Toledo; Suzi Wojdyslawski for her design; and Lisa Lightman for her research assistance. Their skills and good humor were essential in the production of this report.

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Project Head Start has been the foremost publicly funded child development program for low-income children and their families since 1965. First conceived as a model demonstration effort and funded at the federal level, it was for many years virtually the only program of its kind, unmatched in its scope, reach, and ambition. In Fiscal Year (FY) 1988, $1.2 billion in federal funds is allocated for Head Start programs.

In the 1980s, however, there has been a notable increase in *state* funding of preschool programs, particularly for economically disadvantaged children. In FY 1988, 28 states project a total program expenditure of almost $226 million.

The momentum for state-funded preschool programs has come from many areas:

- major shifts in national demographics, such as a rise in the number of preschool-age children and the increased need for child care;
- an increased number of economically disadvantaged children;
- mounting evidence that demonstrates the value of early childhood education, especially for economically disadvantaged children;
- a growing consensus about the need for more rigorous academic standards; and
- a changing political and economic climate, making possible new state initiatives.

These factors have led to a spirit of cooperation among teachers, child advocates, parents, members of the business community, academicians, politicians and policymakers, with a view to finding new resources to improve the quality of life for our nation's young children. The state-funded preschool movement is one outcome of this coalition-building effort.

Recognizing a national trend in this preschool movement, the Head Start Bureau at the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) felt that it was critical to examine this burgeoning activity and its implications for Head Start planning and policy development. Therefore, in August 1987, ACYF funded the Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) in Newton, Massachusetts, to study this movement in a systematic way, and to explore Head Start's relationship to state-funded preschool programs across the country.

Data were collected from more than 180 respondents through a lengthy interview protocol. Our six major data sources included:

1. State-level early childhood education/preschool program administrators
2. Governors' executive assistants or education liaisons
3. Head Start regional office staff and other members of the Head Start regional network
4. Head Start Directors Association presidents
5. A day-long focus group of eight Head Start directors from around the country
6. Legislation, regulations, program standards, and other relevant materials from the states

The national network of Head Start Resource Centers assisted us by conducting initial interviews with program administrators. After conducting additional phone interviews and collecting other data, EDC staff reviewed, tabulated, and analyzed the data.

We wish to underscore three points about this study. First, it does *not* include data on migrant, Native American, or trust territories Head Start programs, since these programs were not within the scope of our project. Second, we concentrated on state funding rather than local funding sources for preschool programs. Thus, we interviewed state-level program administrators, but not local school district administrators. The two exceptions, included because of their all-encompassing city-wide approaches, were New York City's Giant Step Program and the District of Columbia's universal access program for four-year-olds. Third, data were current as of March 1988. Because the state funding situation changes daily, it is possible that some of the projected dollar allocations have altered since then.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The major findings of the study are organized by the six research questions listed below. We address them individually on the following pages.

1. How are states currently supporting preschool education?
2. How do state-funded preschool programs compare with Head Start?
3. How has Head Start coordinated with state-funded preschool programs?
4. What are the barriers to coordination?
5. To what extent does Head Start receive support from state-funded programs?
6. What are the conclusions and implications of this study?

Question 1: How are states currently supporting preschool education?

States are supporting preschool education in two major ways:

1. Eight states have *Head Start-only enactments* that provide supplemental funds exclusively to Head Start programs. Five of these eight states also have general enactments, and three do not.

2. Twenty-five states and the District of Columbia have *general enactments*, in which funding goes to school districts only or to school districts and other nonprofit agencies. The number of programs reported is 30 because we included New York City and the District of Columbia, and because Vermont, New Jersey, and Oregon each have two programs.

A few regions in the country have more state legislative activity than others, with the greatest locus of such activity on the East Coast (particularly in the Northeast), parts of the Midwest, and on the West Coast. Texas, which has mounted a large program, is the only southwestern state with state funding. On the West Coast, however, California, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska have made substantial state commitments to preschool programs for disadvantaged children. See Table 1 for a summary of the status of state funding.

Regional differences in state funding are related to economic factors and social priorities. Some states have a growing economy which has made it possible to fund these programs; other states are experiencing economic difficulties. A state's economy, however, is not the sole determining factor influencing a legislative decision to fund a preschool program. Another important factor is the degree to which state policymakers believe that early education is a state responsibility. In addition to the states with current funding for preschool education, eleven others are planning or have proposed legislation for preschool programs.

The state preschool enactments vary widely in the amount of money allocated, number of children served, specific eligibility requirements regarding age and socioeconomic status of children, and program approach. State funding varies enormously depending on the purpose and scope of the program. The total allocation for all preschool enactments was $177.9 million in 1987, and is estimated to be $225.6 million in 1988. This includes both Head Start-only enactments and general enactments. Table 2 presents a summary of dollar allocations and enrollment figures for 1987 and 1988.

Head Start-Only Enactments

- The eight states with Head Start-only enactments are Alaska, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Rhode Island, and Washington.

- The total funding in FY 1987 was $12.5 million, with a range of $290,000 in Hawaii to $4.5 million in Massachusetts.

TABLE 1

Status of State-Funded Preschool Initiatives

EXISTING		PROPOSED OR IN THE PLANNING STAGE	NO FUNDING
General Enactments	Head Start-only Enactments		
Alaska California Delaware District of Columbia Florida Illinois Kentucky Louisiana Maine Maryland Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Missouri New Jersey (2 programs) New York New York City Ohio Oklahoma Oregon (2 programs) Pennsylvania South Carolina Texas Vermont (2 programs) Washington West Virginia Wisconsin	Alaska* Connecticut Hawaii Maine* Massachusetts* Minnesota* Rhode Island Washington*	Colorado Indiana Iowa Kentucky* New Hampshire New York* North Carolina Ohio* Rhode Island* Virginia (on hold)	Alabama Arizona Arkansas Georgia Idaho Kansas Mississippi Montana Nebraska Nevada New Mexico North Dakota South Dakota Tennessee Utah Wyoming
25 states, New York City, and the District of Columbia	**8 states** **• states that have other state-funded preschool programs**	**6 states** **• states that also have existing programs**	**16 states**

- The projected total funding of $16.8 million for these states for FY 1988 represents a 34 percent increase from FY 1987.

- The majority of Head Start-only enactments are clustered in New England and, in contrast to the general enactments programs, are administered by a state social service or community development department.

General Enactments

- The amount of funding in FY 1987 was $165.4 million, increasing by 26 percent to $208.8 million in FY 1988.

- In 15 of the 25 states, the amount of money allocated to general enactment programs has increased from FY 1987 to FY 1988.

- In FY 1987, a total of 269,818 children participated in programs (median = 10,790 children per program).

- There is not a one-to-one correspondence between funding levels and number of children served because the scope of the programs differs.

- State education agencies administer the funds in all but four of the 30 programs.

- Almost half of the programs serve only four-year-olds; 37 percent serve three- to four-year-olds or three- to five-year-olds; the remainder serve infants or preschool children and their parents.

- Two-thirds of the states target programs to disadvantaged children, while one-fourth have open enrollment in a district or districts.

TABLE 2

State-Funded Preschool Funding Levels and Enrollment Figures, 1987 and 1988

	1987			PROJECTED 1988		
	TOTAL	MEDIAN	RANGE	TOTAL	MEDIAN	RANGE
FUNDING ($ AMOUNT)						
General Enactments	$165.4M	$2.3M	$176,000 - 37.5M	$208.8M	$2.8M	$189,000 - 46.1M
Head Start-only Enactments	$12.5M	$1.5M	$290,000 - 4.5M	$16.8M	$1.8M	$291,790 - 7M
Total Funding	$177.9M	—	—	$225.6M	—	—
ENROLLMENTS (# of Children)						
General Enactments	269,818	10,790	44-120,000	306,602	12,775	40-125,000
Head Start-only Enactments	Not available	—	—	13,349 additional slots	—	724-7,500
Total Enrollments	—	—	—	319,951	—	—

In comparison to the eligibility criteria of state-funded preschoolers, well over half (63 percent) of Head Start's services are for four- to five-year-old children and their families. Eleven percent of the children are five years old; 23 percent are three years old, and only three percent are under three years of age (ACYF, 1988). Ninety percent of Head Start programs' enrollment must fall below the federal poverty line which is $11,650 for a family of four. In addition, Head Start must reserve ten percent of its enrollment for children with disabilities.

General enactment preschool programs have employed one of four basic approaches:

- **The Head Start Model**
  Five of the thirty programs have adopted this model and are required to provide comprehensive services including education, health, social services, parent involvement, and services to children with special needs. Many of the other programs seek to emulate the Head Start model, but their program features are not as comprehensive as Head Start's.

- **Child-Centered Programs**
  Two-thirds (20 out of 30) focus primarily on providing education services to children although some have additional features such as health and nutrition. The majority of these programs (64 percent) are half-day, with another third offering the option of a full day. Eighty-four percent are center-based. The remaining six have both center-based and home-based (home-visit) components.

- **Family-Focused Programs**
  Three of the programs can be characterized as family-focused because they involve parents in a substantive way. These programs serve parents and their children from infancy through age four or age eight, and offer both prevention and intervention services. Services are usually offered in a center-based setting, and the amount of contact with families ranges from 2 hours to 18 hours per week.

- **Parent Education Programs**
  Only two programs focus on parent education services designed to help parents enhance their parenting skills and knowledge of child development. The fact that these services require relatively low start-up or overhead costs allows these parent education programs to serve a large number of families for the dollars allocated.

Question 2: How do state-funded preschool programs compare with Head Start?

Because of Head Start's long track record and its success with low-income children and their families, it is understandable that state programs would be compared with Head Start. We compared state-funded programs with Head Start on

comprehensiveness of services, written standards for early childhood education curricula, and licensing of staff and facilities.

Comprehensiveness of Services

Head Start's comprehensiveness is unique among early childhood programs. The services include:

- Education
- Parent Involvement
- Parent Decision Making
- Medical and Dental Screening
- Medical and Dental Services
- Nutrition
- Mental Health
- Social Services
- Mainstream Setting for Handicapped Children
- Program Evaluation
- Staff Training
- Transportation

All of these are considered important in the design and delivery of services to children and their families. Each program component has a set of standards that specifies the critical elements of services to be provided.

All Head Start programs must adhere to federal program standards and must follow procedures to ensure that children are served appropriately. These include the following:

- Serving handicapped children in a mainstream setting
- Implementing special recruitment efforts
- Coordinating with elementary schools and other providers
- Ensuring that evaluation procedures are conducted by an interdisciplinary diagnostic team

In addition, all Head Start programs are allotted money for staff training and assistance. Furthermore, they are monitored periodically by the federal regional staff of ACYF.

In contrast to Head Start, only seven of the state-funded programs provide comprehensive services. While every program contains an early childhood education component and a majority report having a parent involvement component, fewer than 50 percent reported having other components that are crucial to Head Start programs. The definitions of these program components vary widely among programs. Almost three-quarters of the state-funded programs report having developed program standards, but only eleven sent their standards to us. Those that we received showed a wide variation in standards and guidelines, ranging from very general to very comprehensive. Table 3 presents a breakdown of program features as reported by state-funded program administrators.

TABLE 3

General Preschool Program Features

	ECE	PARENT INVOLV.	PARENT DECIS.	MED./ DENT. SCRN.	MED./ DENT. SERV.	NUTRI-TION	MENTAL HEALTH SERV.	SOCIAL SERV.	MAIN-STRM.	PROG. EVAL.	STAFF TRAIN.
Programs referred to as comprehensive											
Alaska	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
California*	√	√	√			√					√
Florida*	√	√				√		√		√	√
Kentucky	√	√	√			√				√	√
Maryland	√	√				√			√	√	√
Massachusetts*	√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√	√
New Jersey 2*	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
New York	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
N.Y.C.*	√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√	√
Oregon*	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
S. Carolina	√	√				√		√		√	√
Vermont*	√	√	√						√	√	√
Vermont 2*	√	√	√					√	√	√	
W. Virginia	√	√	√	√	√				√		√
Washington*	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Programs not referred to as comprehensive											
Delaware	√	√									
District of Columbia	√	√									
Illinois*	√	√	√			√			√	√	√
Louisiana	√										
Maine	√										
Michigan	√	√	√								
New Jersey 1	√	√				√	√		√	√	
Ohio	√										
Oklahoma	√										
Pennsylvania	√	√	√	√		√			√	√	√
Texas	√										
Wisconsin	√										
	100%	78%	52%	33%	22%	56%	22%	37%	52%	59%	59%

*Head Start receives funds.

Early Childhood Education Curricula

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has developed a guide for developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs. These curriculum guidelines, recognized as *the* standard of good practice in the early childhood field, are very similar to Head Start Program Performance Standards. Head Start programs do not have a standardized national curriculum; rather, they follow a set of principles accompanied by implementation guidelines. Some programs have elected to use or adapt published curricula, while many others have designed their own.

The curriculum used by a state-funded program depends, in large part, on the philosophy of the state education agency (SEA), or of the local education agency (LEA) if program content is determined locally. As is the case with Head Start programs, some of the state-funded programs have adopted curricula approved by the state, and others have adapted published curricula or have developed their own.

Licensing of Staff and Facilities

It is in this third area that the greatest differences exist between Head Start and state-funded preschool programs, particularly those in public schools. The difference centers on what criterion is considered the most important qualification for teachers—experience working with preschool children, a college degree, or a public school teaching credential.

Head Start programs and day care programs are licensed by the same department, usually Human Services, Welfare, or Community Development. Often, the standards set by these departments for physical facilities are quite strict, while the requirements for education and/or training of personnel are often minimal. In contrast, public school programs have less stringent licensing standards for physical space, but usually have strict standards for teacher certification.

NAEYC, in its accreditation guidelines, recommends for the early childhood teacher a bachelor's degree (BA) in early childhood education (ECE) or child development, and for the associate teacher a Child Development Associate (CDA) competency-based credential or an associate degree (AA) in early childhood education or child development.

Head Start teachers must have the minimum qualifications established by the state agency licensing the Head Start program. Although many teachers in Head Start programs do not meet NAEYCs recommended guidelines for accreditation, they have the relevant coursework and experience necessary for working with young children. Because they often do not have the formal college education and public school teaching credential required by SEAs , they cannot teach in state-funded programs. The lack of public school certification of Head Start teachers is one of the barriers to Head Start programs' receiving state funding. In its draft regulations, ACYF is considering requiring, for the first time, qualifications that would include either a CDA credential or an AA, BA, or advanced degree in early childhood education for each Head Start classroom teacher.

In contrast to Head Start, teachers in two-thirds of the general preschool programs are required to have a college degree and a public school teaching credential. Just under half the programs require a bachelor's degree in ECE or a related field, while one-fifth require a bachelor's degree in any field. Many of those programs

requiring a BA and a teaching credential are in public schools. Only five states recognize the CDA credential for teachers in a state-funded preschool program. However, 38 states and the District of Columbia have incorporated the CDA credential into their state licensing regulations as an option for child care staff qualifications. See Table 4 for the *minimum* credentials required for teachers in state-funded preschool programs.

Question 3: How has Head Start coordinated with state-funded preschool programs?

Coordination between Head Start and state-funded programs has taken several forms, as described below.

Head Start's Role in Legislative Activity

Head Start program staff at the local level have been involved and can be involved in legislative activity in five major ways:

1. Representing Head Start on state advisory boards or task forces
2. Providing written and oral testimony at State House and Senate hearings
3. Meeting with legislators and governors to provide data on services
4. Inviting legislators to visit Head Start programs to illustrate Head Start's comprehensive services
5. Helping to draft legislation

In 42 percent of the general enactments, Head Start was represented on a state-wide committee, whether or not Head Start was eligible to receive allocations as a result of the enactment. Both Head Start directors' associations and individual Head Start directors were involved in this process. (The more Head Start is involved, the more likely its standards and goals are represented in legislation.)

Even though the legislative processes are often the same, the extensiveness of Head Start's involvement in Head Start-only enactments is quite different from the extent of its involvement in general enactments. Head Start programs, usually through their state directors' associations, have been the catalyst for legislation providing for supplemental funds. Head Start directors and directors' associations were very active in helping to draft legislation, meeting with key legislators, mobilizing parents, testifying at legislative hearings, and working with ACYF.

Head Start directors must agree on the proposed use of funds they request from the state legislature, and must work together to present a compelling need for this additional money. Often, they must acquaint legislators with the purpose of Head Start, the extent of its services, and the challenges it faces. Negotiations between Head Start and sponsors of a bill are often required in order to justify continued funding, not just in the first year, but in succeeding years as well.

In the eleven states with proposed legislation, Head Start has become increasingly involved in legislative activity and is playing a major role in seeking state funds.

TABLE 4

Minimum Credentials Required for Teachers in State-Funded Preschool Programs

1	**B.A. DEGREE IN ECE + PRE-KINDERGARTEN PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** Maryland (Pre-Kindergarten-3) Delaware (Pre-Kindergarten-2) Ohio (Pre-Kindergarten) Oklahoma (Nursery-Kindergarten) Michigan (ECE endorsement)
2	**A.A. DEGREE IN ECE OR CDA AND TRAINING IN ECE** Washington (either)* Florida (CDA)* Illinois (CDA) (One of 2 options; see #4.)* Missouri (either) California (child center permit)*+
3	**B.A. DEGREE IN ECE + NON PRE-KINDERGARTEN PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** Massachusetts (Kindergarten-3)*+ Pennsylvania (Nursery-3 or Kindergarten-6) South Carolina (K-4)
4	**B.A. DEGREE IN ANY FIELD + PRE-KINDERGARTEN PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** New Jersey (some course work in ECE) New York City*+ New York Illinois (some coursework in ECE + ECE certification)*
5	**B.A. DEGREE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION + PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** Wisconsin (Kindergarten or Nursery) Texas (Kindergarten or ECE or Elementary or ESL or Voc Ed)*
6	**B.A. DEGREE IN ECE RELATED FIELD + PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** Louisiana (ECE or Kindergarten or Elementary 1-8) District of Columbia
7	**DEGREE PREFERRED BUT NOT REQUIRED** Kentucky (some coursework in ECE + experience in childcare) Vermont (left to discretion of LEA)*
8	**B.A. IN ANY FIELD + NON PRE-KINDERGARTEN PUBLIC SCHOOL CERTIFICATION** Maine West Virginia Minnesota+
9	**NO CREDENTIALS** Alaska (resident of village)
	* **Head Start programs receive state funds.** + **State agency may waive public school certification for Head Start teaching staff.**

The Head Start community now has the benefit of experience in other states, and its strength as a force in the state preschool movement is growing.

Coordination as a Result of Legislation

Whether or not Head Start benefits monetarily from the state enactment, some states have mandated collaboration among state education agencies, local education agencies and Head Start. In seven states, legislation required coordination with Head Start in the implementation of state-funded preschool programs, either at the state or local level. For instance, in some states a state interagency coordinating council must include a Head Start representative, and at the local level each school district must have an interagency council that includes Head Start representation.

Interagency Inititatives

Over the years, ACYF has instituted a number of interagency efforts designed to strengthen Head Start's services to children and families. These initiatives have traditionally begun with a federal interagency agreement that leads to cooperation on state and local levels and enables this cooperation. Two recent and ongoing initiatives that are relevant to Head Start programs' relationship to state-funded preschools, particularly those administered by SEAs, are:

1. **Services to Preschoolers with Disabilities**

   In 1978, ACYF and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) signed an interagency agreement to collaborate on providing services to young handicapped children. The ongoing and substantial history of federal, state and local collaboration regarding these services prompted us to examine whether there is a relationship between Head Start's collaboration with SEAs regarding special education services, and Head Start's involvement in the development of state-funded preschools.

   Our data indicate that 39 states have state-level interagency agreements between the SEA and Head Start on serving handicapped children. Of these 39 states, 22 have funded preschool programs. Sixteen of these 22 states have invited Head Start representatives to participate in state-funded preschool activities. This participation has included involvement with a state advisory committee by providing testimony in support of legislation and/or participating in advocacy efforts. These data suggest that interagency efforts to serve handicapped children have substantially contributed to Head Start's visibility as a significant service provider and, in almost three-fourths of the cases, have paved the way for Head Start participation in state-funded preschool activities.

2. **Transition from Head Start to Elementary School**

   In 1986, ACYF launched "The National Initiative on Transition from Preschool to Elementary School" under the guidance of a national steering committee and with the help of 30 demonstration communities. The purpose of this initiative was to identify effective strategies for easing the transition of Head Start children and their families into public schools. A multi-media kit on transition and a publication entitled "Easing the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten: A Guide for Early Childhood Teachers and Administrators" now serve as the basis for nationwide efforts in this program area. The package will be widely disseminated in 1988-

1989 by the national network of Resource Centers and the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).

These two initiatives demonstrate that Head Start has long recognized the importance of collaborating with SEAs, and that these efforts have been well received by SEAs.

Informal Working Relationships
Although formal interagency agreements at the federal, state, and local levels are most evident for programs serving handicapped children and not very prevalent for non-handicapped children, *informal* working relations for serving both populations exist at the local level.

We sought information not only about relationships with state-funded preschools, but also with other agencies. In more than two-thirds of the states, significant informal collaboration was reported by Head Start directors. Head Start has joint activities with LEAs and other service agencies, including agencies that provide dental, health, and mental health screening and diagnostic services , joint training, joint curriculum planning, and transition activities. Cooperating with social service agencies handling protective care cases, sharing waiting lists, and working together to avoid overlap in recruiting in a particular area are other examples of informal working relationships.

Question 4: What are the barriers to coordination?

Although coordination is beginning to occur, there exists a heightened sense of competition between Head Start programs and state-funded preschool programs, especially those in the public schools. This competition makes the prospect of collaboration difficult for the two systems.

In our interviews, most of our respondents—regardless of the agency receiving state preschool funds or of the manner in which funds are distributed—reported at least some competition. In two-thirds of the general enactment programs, competition was reported in one or more of the following areas:

- **Competition for Children**
  For many years Head Start was virtually the only program in many states offering educational services to disadvantaged preschool children and their families. In the past five years, however, more and more states have instituted programs that target some of that same population of preschool children from low-income families. When target populations overlap, duplication of services increases the competition for children. (Many parents are confused by the choice of services because they do not receive enough information about the options.)

- **Competition for Staff**
  Competition for staff exists because of the disparity in job requirements and salaries of Head Start teachers and teachers in state-funded public school programs. Many Head Start programs have seen a drain on their college-educated, certified teachers who can receive higher salaries—as much as $10,000 more—teaching in public school programs.

- **Competition for Space**
  Competition for space is another serious issue to resolve. In the 1970s and early 1980s when school enrollments declined, Head Start programs were able to rent or use space without charge in public schools. Now that enrollments are on the increase again, school districts are taking back that space. Moreover, during the same period many schools were turned into other types of facilities and now are not reclaimable, so competition for space is a problem for both the public schools and Head Start programs.

Question 5: To what extent does Head Start receive support from state-funded programs?

States generally use one of four mechanisms to fund preschool programs. In all but the first of these, Head Start may be able to receive state funding. The funding mechanisms and their advantages and disadvantages are described below.

1. The SEA distributes funds to LEAs, without allowing LEAs to subcontract to Head Start or other nonprofit agencies (10 programs). This model is used in New York, New Jersey, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Louisiana, and Oklahoma.

   Advantages

   - Preschool programs, often new to many local school districts, are housed in the familiar institution of the public school.
   - Because money is kept "in house," the monitoring issue is simplified.

   Disadvantages

   - Preschool teaching is distinctly different; most public school teachers and administrators are not prepared to work with 3- and 4-year-olds.
   - Public school programs have a high staff/child ratio (1:20), while research shows that young children need a small staff/child ratio.
   - Emphasis is on an academic approach in curricula.
   - Furnishings and facilities in public schools are not often appropriate for preschoolers.
   - Children may not receive other necessary services, such as nutrition and medical/dental screening.

2. The SEA distributes funds to LEAs, with subcontracts by LEAs allowed by law (11 programs). This model is used in Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas, and West Virginia. Only three of these states actually subcontract with Head Start programs.

Advantages

- Model of program is built on existing services.
- Head Start is a natural choice for subcontracting if other components are included in the curricula (e.g., nutrition and medical/dental screening).
- Lower salaries of Head Start teachers represent an incentive for LEAs to subcontract to them.
- The need for continuous monitoring of the subcontractor encourages coordination and communication.

Disadvantages

- In only three of the eleven programs do LEAs actually subcontract to Head Start programs and other agencies.
- Licensing of Head Start teachers and facilities can be problematic.
- A question arises as to whether the local or state agency is responsible for monitoring.
- Level of parent involvement in Head Start is fundamentally different from that of parents in traditional public school activities.
- There is a "turf" issue: i.e., some public school teachers' unions and administrators discourage subcontracting.
- Subcontractor is "out of the state loop"; lack of state structure on the part of Head Start is perceived as a barrier to subcontracting.

3. The state administrative agency distributes funds to LEAs *or* nonprofit agencies (such as Head Start and other community agencies) that apply competitively for funds (6 programs). This model is used in Vermont, New Jersey, New York City, California, Oregon, and Washington.

Advantages

- Through a competitive grant process, programs are funded that can best demonstrate cost effectiveness and the ability to offer appropriate services.
- State-funded preschools can be co-located with Head Start, allowing for lower startup costs.
- Monitoring by the state administrative agency is built into the legislation.
- Potential is strong for enhancing coordination among early childhood agencies.

Disadvantage

- If funds are distributed through an agency other than the SEA, coordination with SEA and LEAs is not necessarily enhanced.

4. A state administrative agency distributes funds only to Head Start programs in order to supplement federal Head Start funds (8 programs). This model is used in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Hawaii, Alaska, and Washington.

Advantages

- This is a cost-effective model that builds on an extensive, existing Head Start service system.
- Head Start staff, traditionally underpaid, are provided with enhanced salaries.
- Comprehensive services to preschool children at risk are expanded.
- Head Start-only enactments fund programs that usually meet NAEYC objective criteria.
- An atmosphere of healthy competition is created among Head Start programs within a state through the competitive grant process.

Disadvantages

- Fear may exist that funding will be for one time only, and not continuous.
- Model may promote divisiveness within the early childhood community.
- Not all preschool children and their families may need Head Start's comprehensive services.
- Questions arise as to the eligibility requirements a state uses to fund Head Start expansion. What guidelines should be used--state or federal?

Question 6: What are the conclusions and implications of this study?

Planning

While a proliferation of state-funded programs has led to increased competition for staff, facilities and children in many communities, Head Start administrators, child care professionals, and public school personnel would all agree that this competition is not the result of too many resources being applied to early childhood services. It is, rather, the consequence of a lack of planning for an integrated service system on state and community levels.

The growth of state-funded preschools has underscored the need for a long-term approach to planning. Creating interagency groups state wide can be a vehicle for such planning because groups such as these can tackle many priority issues, using basic demographic data as a backdrop for the planning process.

Coordination
A compelling need exists to coordinate existing services provided by Head Start and state-funded preschool programs at both state and local levels. For instance, local planning committees could be formed along the lines of those that already exist in some states. In addition, there is a need for an official, state-level contact person representing Head Start, since many respondents identified the absence of a liaison as a major barrier to coordination.

Funding Mechanisms
Depending on the goal of preschool legislation, funding approaches and models will vary. For instance:

- If a state wishes to allow for maximum flexibility in communities, it might consider permitting any agency to be eligible for state funds.
- If a state wishes to provide comprehensive services to additional low-income children and their families, it might consider expanding Head Start as a cost-effective route to that goal.
- If a state wishes to furnish universal access to education for four-year-olds, it might consider the LEA-only model.
- If a state wishes to offer a choice of services in a community while keeping administrative control in the public schools, it might consider the LEA-with-subcontracting model.

When money goes exclusively to one group or another, coordination with other early childhood providers is not enhanced or promoted. Alternatively, when there are multiple delivery systems, coordination is encouraged, and the community has more flexibility in deciding what services it needs.

Dissemination of Information
Closely tied to the issue of coordination is the need for more widespread dissemination of information about the scope and character of the Head Start program. Lack of information exists about Head Start programs in general, and about Head Start's extensive early childhood services in particular.

In addition, it is critical that state policymakers have more information about what Head Start means when it identifies itself as a comprehensive child development program. Its longevity and success as a program serving low-income children and families place Head Start staff in a unique position to assist state agencies wishing to support programs for children at risk.

Salaries and Qualifications
Head Start and state-funded preschool programs often compete for teaching staff. There is a disparity between the qualifications and salaries of teachers in these two types of programs. Pay disparity will continue unless everyone in the early childhood field (public school preschool programs, day care, Head Start, and other early childhood providers) works toward common personnel standards set by the profession.

Facilities
Because the population of children under five years old has increased, public schools have taken back space they had given or rented to Head Start programs. Consequently, Head Start programs are faced with a shortage of affordable and appropriate facilities.

Some Head Start directors have approached local corporations for financial assistance in this area. Long-range community planning is desirable, and should be coordinated among state education agencies, state departments of community development, and Head Start.

Program Standards
Program standards, an important element in the development of any community program, need to be defined in a common manner because quality varies so much among programs. Relatively few of the state-funded preschool programs have developed standards for all of their program features. Through its National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, NAEYC has developed accreditation criteria and procedures for early childhood programs, and both Head Start and state-funded preschools may want to think about obtaining accreditation. They might also wish to consider a self-assessment that consists of several levels of attainment for each criterion, rather than a single, stated standard necessary to meet a goal.

edc

education development center, inc., 55 chapel street, newton, massachusetts 02160